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CENTRAL BANK GOVERNORS BEGIN 2-DAY MEETING

FL192344 Bridgetown CANA in English 2032 GMT 19 Mar 84

[By Rudi Williams]

[Text] Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, March 19 (CANA) -- Central bank governors of the Americas began a two-day meeting here to compare notes on economic problems facing Latin America and the Caribbean.

Trinidad and Tobago Central Bank Governor Victor Bruce said the previous 20 meetings of the group had seen "real advances" in tackling inflation and the severe debt burden.

Latin America's indebtedness is currently put at about 230 billion U.S. dollars.

"Through the numerous discussions and exchange of ideas, such as we have on these occasions, many shortcomings in terms of the lack of national statistical information or even the types of economic indicators have been identified," Bruce said. He noted that research projects had been undertaken to fill the statistical gaps and "... the reservoir of statistical information necessary to inform policy has been progressively increased and the quality up-graded."

The 101 listed delegates from 29 countries including representatives of regional and international financial institutions will talk "freely and frankly ... in an informal atmosphere," conference officials stated.

The meeting of all countries in North and South America and the Caribbean Basin will be followed on Wednesday and Thursday by a conference of Central Bank governors of Latin America and Spain.

Conference officials explained that the Central Bank governors and officials will use the meeting to "exchange views and ideas in an informal atmosphere."

"They discuss and hope to learn from one another," officials stated, noting that no decisions are expected to be taken. No details of the agenda have been released.

Commonwealth Caribbean countries listed as attending are Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Guyana, Barbados, and Belize, and the East Caribbean Central Bank of the seven nation Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States.

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FOREIGN MINISTER ON RELATIONS WITH U.S.

PY261127 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1750 GMT 25 Mar 84

[Excerpts] Buenos Aires, 25 Mar (NA) -- Foreign Minister Dante Caputo today stated that negotiations on the Argentine foreign debt "have found great understanding from the United States" and that relations with the United States "tend to be very good."

The foreign minister said that at the meeting with the U.S. secretary of state to be held in Washington on 11 April, they will discuss "overall relations between Argentina and the United States, our mutual views on Latin American problems, the situation in Central America, and the foreign debt problem."

Caputo added that on 10 April, the day before the meeting, he will hold a working meeting with Henry Kissinger, President Ronald Reagan's adviser, and that in the afternoon he will give a lecture at the Council on Foreign Relations on relations in the hemisphere and the democratic process in Latin America.

Caputo said that the meeting with the U.S. secretary of state will take place at a time when Argentine-U.S. relations "can be described as tending to be very good."

"Over the past months, we have significantly strengthened dialogue between the two countries, because this dialogue has allowed better understanding," the Argentine foreign minister said. He added: "We have had an important number of U.S. visitors of different levels. We have talked a lot, and as I see it, this dialogue has allowed us, through a mutual understanding, to achieve an increasingly more important relationship with the United States."

Regarding the impact of these relations on the Argentine foreign debt, Caputo stated that "from the point of view of political reality, there is great understanding in the United States of the Argentine situation and of the problems it is facing to pay its debt according to the terms established previously. Thus, what we are doing now is going through all the normal procedures with the IMF."

"In this regard, we are finding understanding and an adequate dialogue, but obviously these things are often very difficult because the banks must also respond to their depositors. I want to say that it is not as simple as it looks, but we hope that as time passes this situation will improve," he stated.

GRINSPUN PROPOSES DEBT REGIONALIZATION, BONUSES

PY261257 Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 1030 GMT 26 Mar 84

[Text] During a round table meeting in Punta del Este of delegations from debtor countries, Argentine Economy Minister Bernardo Grinspun proposed the regionalization of the foreign debt. Grinspun also proposed that interest payments should be suspended for a period of time and that, at the same time, bonuses with a fixed interest rate should be issued.

Grinspun spoke to the Mexican and Brazilian delegations at the meeing held at the Hotel San Rafael, making what has been termed the most concrete among the expositions made during the conference. He stressed that a period of grace was needed for the recovery of the world economy. The minister said that only in this way will we be able to make this heavy, uphill economic journey.

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LEFTIST LEADERS GATHER, RAP U.S. POLICY

PA221949 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1848 GMT 22 Mar 84

[Text] Bogota, 22 Mar (DPA) -- Latin American leftist leaders in Bogota today criticized the U.S. military presence in Central America and said that "sooner or later, the Latin American countries that are under dictatorial regimes will fully reestablish their democratic freedoms."

The 4-day meeting of leftist Latin American leaders began in Bogota with the presence of important political figures of the area, most of whom are in exile.

In reviewing the current situation in Central America and the relations of Central American leaders with leaders from other Latin American countries, Juan Bosch, former president of the Dominican Republic, said that "there is tyranny" in El Salvador. He also defended the Sandinist Government of Nicaragua and warned that if the United States continues its policy of interventionism in Central America there would be little reason to be optimistic about the future of the Caribbean region.

Bosch said that "the United States believes in a military solution for Central America" and recalled the fact that last week the U.S. Congress approved an additional $21 million "to strengthen the Somozist army led by the CIA."

Bosch denied that there is also military intervention by the USSR in the area, despite the presence of Cuban advisers in Nicaragua.

The participants in the meeting include Colombian leftist leaders and Latin American political celebrities, including Bosch; Hortensia Bussi de Allende, widow of Salvador Allende, former president of Chile; Guillermo Ungo, president of El Salvador's Revolutionary Democratic Front; Roberto Arguello, chief justice of the Nicaraguan Supreme Court; and other leaders from Chile, Uruguay, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Colombia.